

## PENNSYLVANIA

### FREEDMEN'S RELIEF ASSOCIATION.

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This Association has been in existence, though originally under a somewhat different name and with a more circumscribed field of action, for the space of two years. It had its origin in a public meeting held in this city, in National Hall, on the 5th of March, 1862. That meeting was called in response to appeals made to the people of the North by Commodore Dupont, General Sherman, and others, in behalf of the 10,000 liberated blacks of South Carolina. The destitution of these people, moral and physical, was strongly set forth by eminent speakers and a committee appointed to devise and execute measures for their relief. Assuming the name of the "Port Royal Relief Committee," the gentlemen thus appointed proceeded to perform the duties assigned them. They raised money, and purchased and forwarded food and clothing sufficient to meet the immediate demands of the people. This done, and there being no further pressing need of physical assistance, they next turned their attention to the necessity of industrial organization, and the means needed for the people's moral and intellectual improvement. They therefore selected and sent into the field superintendents of labor and well qualified school teachers. As the people, under these influences, advanced in improvement, and began to earn wages sufficient and more than sufficient for their maintenance, the Committee established a store among them, to protect them, by the fair rates at which commodities were to be sold, from the extortions of army sutlers and other traders. This store was, as it is still, supported by a capital set apart for the purpose, and conducted by a gentleman well qualified for the duty.

The success of each and all of these measures has been complete. The food and clothing kept the more destitute from perishing, while, by awakening in the breasts of all a lively

sense of gratitude, it made subsequent effort in their behalf more effective. The superintendents gave direction to the people's industry, forming among them habits of self-reliance, and making their labor remunerative to themselves and of inestimable value to the country. The teachers gathered the children and unemployed adults into schools, instructing them in the rudiments of elementary learning, and inculcating upon them lessons of morality, religion, and social order.

In these measures the Philadelphia Committee acted in concert with similar associations in Boston and New York. The enterprise thus conducted by these three bodies has been in all respects an absolute success. No alms are now dispensed on those islands by this or any other association. The freed blacks there, now 15,000 in number, are a self-supporting, wealth-producing people. They are orderly in their behaviour, and are rapidly rising in the scale of intelligence. The able-bodied are serving their country as soldiers, while the less robust are making themselves equally useful in cultivating the fields. Some of the younger ones, who two years ago came into the schools in a condition of absolute ignorance, are now competent to take the part of assistant teachers. The "Philadelphia store," located in the island of St. Helena, has sold in the last eighteen months goods to the amount of \$30,000. This sum, realized from the sales of a single neighborhood, indicates the prosperity of the people, while, at the same time, it suggests the advantages yet to be derived by the North from commercial intercourse with them. The savings of the store to purchasers, according to the estimate of the gentleman in charge, have been \$6000 on the sales reported. This sum has been that much added to the people's ability to buy land; for it ought to be known that the blacks at Port Royal are rapidly becoming proprietors of the soil. The Government has granted them pre-emption rights at prices not beyond their reach, and the more thrifty among them are availing themselves of the opportunity thus afforded of becoming planters on their own account.

While the Committee were thus engaged on the Sea Islands, the advance of our arms was opening new fields for similar effort in other parts of the country. In the south-west especially, where the number of liberated blacks had reached a figure somewhere

between one and two hundred thousand, the demand for aid became especially pressing. To meet this demand, the Port Royal Relief Committee determined to enlarge their field of action. Changing their name to that of the Pennsylvania Freedmen's Relief Association, they called a public meeting, and set forth to a crowded audience the new and more enlarged views of the question. At this meeting, held in Concert Hall on the 3d of November, and presided over by Bishop Potter, strong pictures were presented of the destitution of the freed people, and earnest appeals made in their behalf. To these appeals the audience responded, by a resolution unanimously adopted, declaring that the people of the North owed it alike to Humanity and to the Government, to aid these enfranchised people to the full extent of their necessities, in the trials of their transition state. They also declared, by a vote equally unanimous, that a sum of not less than \$100,000 should be raised by the people of the State to carry this resolve into execution. At a later and still larger meeting—held in the Academy of Music on the 16th of February—Bishop Simpson presiding, similar declarations were made, with equal unanimity, and with added emphasis.

While the Association were thus diffusing information and calling out the sentiment of the people, they were at the same time busy raising funds and disbursing them for the purposes for which they were intended. They have collected since the date of their meeting on the 3d of November, \$36,491.08. They have purchased and sent to different parts of the South, blankets, shoes, hospital stores, and clothing for women and children, to the amount of \$18,500. These supplies for physical wants they are preparing to follow up, as in the case of Port Royal, with more enduring benefactions. In addition to the corps of able teachers and assistants, nine in number, which they are now maintaining in South Carolina, they are selecting and commissioning for new places of labor others equally well qualified. In order to concentrate their efforts and guard against the evils of too wide a field, the Association have concluded to confine their operations in the south-west to Middle Tennessee and parts adjacent, especially the northern parts of Alabama and Georgia. They have ap-

pointed a General Superintendent, whose business it will be—making Nashville or some point near that city his centre—to organize schools, and locate in charge of them, such teachers as may be sent out for that purpose.

By these and such like means this Association, acting as heretofore in conjunction with other bodies of similar character, propose to do for all the Southern States what has already been done with so much success for a portion of South Carolina. If the negroes of the Sea Islands, the lowest in the land in point of intellectual and physical condition, can, in a brief space of time, be raised into a self-sustaining, law-abiding and comparatively well instructed people, the same thing at least can be done for the remaining blacks of the South, most of whom are of a much more promising character.

The Penna. Freedmen's Relief Association have raised since their organization in March 1862, \$10,000 worth of clothing and other needful articles—all of which have been distributed—and \$48,459.69 in money. These supplies of clothes, &c., and this amount of money have been collected without any expense of commission or salary. And of the entire sum raised, with the exception of the balance now in the treasury, and a small amount expended in means necessary to the Association's existence, every dollar has gone direct to the object for which it was contributed.

This account of its history and operations the Association respectfully submits to the public, with an earnest request to all loyal and humane people for their co-operation and support. Contributions to its funds should be sent to E. W. Clark, Treasurer, 35 south 3d street; or, if more convenient, they may be left at the rooms of the Association, to be forwarded to that gentleman, by whom they will be gratefully received and duly acknowledged.

STEPHEN COLWELL,  
*President.*

B. P. HUNT,  
*Vice President.*

ELLIS YARNALL,  
*Recording Sec'y.* }  
J. M. MCKIM,  
*Corresponding Sec'y.* }

March 1st, 1864.

## TESTIMONY OF THE CLERGY.

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At a meeting of clergymen without respect to denomination, held in Philadelphia on the 25th of February, 1864, the following resolutions, prepared by a special Committee, were unanimously adopted, and having been submitted to others for their consideration, received the signatures appended:

*Resolved*, That the work of the "Pennsylvania Freedmen's Relief Association" is one that commands our heartiest approval.

*Resolved*, That the Association itself, concerned as it is with interests of the first moment to us as Christian citizens, and composed of gentlemen of unquestioned standing in the community, is entitled to our confidence and esteem.

*Resolved*, That we commend them and their cause to churches of every name throughout the city and State.

Alonzo Potter  
Wm. Bacon Stevens  
Henry J. Morton  
Richard Newton  
George Leeds  
E. A. Washburn  
John S. Stone  
John A. Vaughan  
Charles D. Cooper  
M. A. De Wolfe Howe  
J. Gordon Maxwell  
W. W. Spear  
Edward Lounsbery  
Benjamin Watson  
Samuel E. Appleton  
Dr. R. Goodwin  
William Suddards  
G. Emlen Hare  
William H. Hare  
J. W. Robins  
Kingston Goddard  
George Bringhurst  
Robert J. Parvin  
William Rudder  
Richard A. Carden  
C. A. L. Richards  
George A. Strong  
Robert C. Matlack  
D. S. Miller

J. Wheaton Smith  
R. Jeffery  
D. C. Eddy  
William Cathcart  
J. H. Peters  
J. B. Simmons  
Joseph H. Kennard  
J. Hyatt Smith  
Wm. D. Siegfried  
James Cooper  
W. H. Marsh  
J. A. McKean  
Thomas P. Coulston  
K. A. Fleischmann  
Joseph Perry  
William S. Hall  
J. E. Cheshire  
A. H. Danforth  
John H. Castle  
A. J. Hay  
Wm. H. Furness  
Richard Eddy  
A. B. Atkins  
Edward A. Foggo  
R. G. Chase  
D. Otis Kellogg, Jr.  
Wilbur F. Paddock  
Daniel Washburn  
J. A. Childs

Albert Barnes  
 Thomas Brainerd  
 Frank L. Robbins  
 Daniel March  
 William T. Catta  
 George F. Wiswell  
 Thos. Shepherd  
 John W. Mears  
 B. B. Hotchkiss  
 J. G. Butler  
 E. B. Bruen  
 E. E. Adams  
 P. C. Headley  
 J. S. Willis  
 Robert Adair  
 John McLeod  
 J. Y. Mitchell  
 Wm. T. Eva  
 Jonathan Edwards  
 George Junkin  
 Daniel Gaston  
 M. C. Sutphen  
 Wm. McElroy  
 W. R. Worley  
 Geo. Morton  
 Wm. J. Gibson  
 Wm. Blackwood  
 James H. Baird  
 M. B. Grier  
 Joseph F. Cooper  
 Francis Church  
 W. W. Barr  
 James Price  
 J. B. Dales  
 J. W. J. Wylie  
 Y. P. Stevenson  
 Samuel O. Wylie  
 F. Hendricks  
 A. Culver  
 S. W. Crittenden

A. Atwood  
 F. Moore  
 S. W. Thomas  
 C. Hill  
 I. H. Alday  
 H. F. Hurn  
 D. W. Bartine  
 Joseph Castle  
 A. Rittenhouse  
 B. F. Price  
 T. C. Murphy  
 F. Hodgson  
 A. Manship  
 W. C. Best  
 W. Major  
 A. Longacre  
 M. D. Kurtz  
 David Steel  
 Phillips Brooks  
 James D. W. Peny  
 Treadwell Walden  
 Thomas C. Yarnall  
 Alexander Shiras  
 Harman L. Duhring  
 Charles Higbee  
 Gustavus M. Murray  
 Joseph N. Mulford  
 Samuel Durborrow  
 John Long  
 William J. Alston  
 Joseph B. Moore  
 William T. Sabine  
 W. W. Taylor  
 F. W. Graus  
 Jeremiah Miller  
 R. A. Mallery  
 George Van Deurs  
 H. Augustus Smith  
 Charles Smith  
 Lewellyn Pratt